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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/886,415	06/20/2001	Frank P. Forbath	Forbat. F-1	7644

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EXAMINER

LINDINGER, MICHAEL L

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2841

DATE MAILED: 01/29/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/886,415	FORBATH, FRANK P.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Michael L. Lindinger	2841

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____ 6) Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The amendment filed November 20, 2002 is objected to under 35 U.S.C. 132 because it introduces new matter into the disclosure. 35 U.S.C. 132 states that no amendment shall introduce new matter into the disclosure of the invention. The added material which is not supported by the original disclosure is as follows: In the Amendment (Paper No. 5), Amendment "A1", which is found in the Specification, page 2, line 2. Applicant is required to cancel the new matter in the reply to this Office Action.

Claim Objections

1. Applicant amended Claim 5 to correct the word "ome" in line 27, page 15 to the word "one". Examiner's objection regarding this matter is withdrawn.

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's arguments with respect to Claims 1-8 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

1. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Forbath U.S. Patent No. 4,493,043 in view of Fresquez U.S. Patent No. 4,711,585 in further view of Del Principe U.S. Patent No. 4,403,777. Forbath teaches a hand held apparatus for use during pregnancy labor comprising the steps a visible display 20, a calculating means U2, a memory device U1, U3 and a selection means 18, including audible alert within contraction modes alerting the user and others when parameters are met, as well as audible beeper or buzzer (Col. 4, lines 55+; Col. 13, lines 60+; FIG. 1). Forbath does not explicitly teach a handheld apparatus for use during pregnancy labor comprising an enclosure case of essentially rectangular shape providing a lower portion having width enabled for enclosing within the palm of one hand, and an upper portion of greater width than the lower portion, the case further comprising a front and back panels, said panels in convergent juxtaposition between a top and bottom surfaces (not explicitly numbered), the front panel providing a display device, actuation buttons, and a sound port. Fresquez teaches a handheld apparatus for use during pregnancy labor comprising an enclosure case 11 of essentially rectangular shape providing a lower

portion having width enabled for enclosing within the palm of one hand, and an upper portion of greater width than the lower portion, the case further comprising a front 12 and back 24 panels, said panels in convergent juxtaposition between a top and bottom surfaces (not explicitly numbered), the front panel providing a display device 19, actuation buttons 14-15, as well as audible cues that may be substituted for the visual indicating means (Col. 3, lines 16+; FIG. 1-2). Del Principe teaches a handheld computing apparatus comprising a microprocessor, a sound port 40 positioned on the upper portion/face of the housing, as well as opposing shoulders (not explicitly numbered) for enhanced gripping (Col. 3, lines 20+; Col. 4, lines 20+; FIG. 1) It would have been obvious to a person skilled in the art at the time of the invention to not only adapt Forbath to include a design with an essentially rectangular shape and shoulders that is a conventional method in the art to provide increased grip for the user, as well as to include a sound port positioned on the front of the housing versus within the housing to clarify audible signals generated within the enclosure. By providing shoulders, the Applicant is increasing the surface area of the lower portion, thereby increasing friction between the user's hand and the lower portion of the apparatus, thereby providing a better grip to the user.

2. Claims 2-8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over Forbath U.S. Patent No. 4,493,043 in view of Fresquez U.S. Patent No. 4,711,585. Regarding Claim 2, Forbath teaches a method of timing childbirth labor contractions comprising the steps of: providing a timing device with a visible display 20, a calculating

means U2, a memory device U1, U3 and a selection means 18; selecting an initiation time for each of plurality of labor contractions at the onset thereof; displaying elapsed contraction time during each of the contractions on the visible display; selecting a termination time for each of the labor contractions at the diminution thereof; calculating a contraction time duration for each of the contractions; storing each of the time intervals and time durations in the memory; and displaying the time durations and intervals, in sequence, including visual indication distinguishing between time duration display and time interval display, as well as pre-determined time intervals that are to be used in the evaluation of actual accumulated values (Col. 3, lines 3+; Col. 4, lines 19+; Col. 5, lines 5+; Col. 6, lines 18+). Forbath does not explicitly teach a method of comparing the sequences of time duration and intervals with the expected sequences (values) in a childbirth timing apparatus. Fresquez teaches a method of comparing the sequences of time duration and intervals with the expected sequences (values) in a childbirth timing apparatus (Col. 5, lines 30+; Col. 6, lines 1+). It would have been obvious to a person skilled in the art at the time of the invention to adapt the Forbath reference to compare and evaluate the actual time values with the expected time values during the birthing of a child. By comparing values, the user may evaluate the level of success during the birthing process in regards to contraction times and breathing patterns.

Regarding Claims 3 and 6, Forbath teaches a method of timing childbirth labor contractions comprising the steps of: providing a timing device with a visible display 20,

a calculating means U2, a memory device U1, U3 and a selection means 18, further including steps of storing a plurality of childbirth labor practice instruction sets in the memory device, the instruction sets including an early, middle, and late phases of pregnancy phases, as well as displaying and indicating one of the practice sets, and an audible sound to alert when a contraction occurs (Col. 4, lines 19+). Forbath does not explicitly teach the instruction sets including: early labor, active labor, transition labor, and pushing labor. It would have been obvious to a person skilled in the art at the time of the invention to adapt Forbath circuitry to include a specific number and designating characteristics of practice instruction sets. Although the Applicant includes another "phase" or practice set of pregnancy, the length or duration of these practice sets are not explicitly defined, therefore Forbath could easily be adapted to divide three practice phases to four practice phases, highlighting the fact the total time in labor does not change.

Regarding Claims 4-5 and 7, Forbath teaches a method of timing childbirth labor contractions comprising the steps of: providing a timing device with a visible display 20, a calculating means U2, a memory device U1, U3 and a selection means 18; selecting an initiation time for each of plurality of labor contractions at the onset thereof; displaying elapsed contraction time during each of the contractions on the visible display; selecting a termination time for each of the labor contractions at the diminution thereof; calculating a contraction time duration for each of the contractions; storing each of the time intervals and time durations in the memory; and displaying the time durations

and intervals, in sequence, including visual indication distinguishing between time duration display and time interval display, as well as audible alert warnings provided by the system during the labor pain timer mode and contraction rehearsing mode in response to the programmed microprocessor commands, as well as enabling an alert action when a programmed value matches a recorded/calculated contraction interval and duration values, further including labeling for contraction duration and interval. (Col. 3, lines 3+; Col. 4, lines 19+; Col. 5, lines 5+; Col. 6, lines 18+). Forbath does not explicitly teach a method of selecting at least one alert parameter from contraction duration, labor contraction interval, labor contraction duration quantities, labor contraction interval quantities, and the "and" and "or" function storing the selected at least one alert labor contraction parameter in the memory device, or a method of comparing the sequences of time duration and intervals with the expected sequences (values) in a childbirth timing apparatus. Fresquez teaches a method of comparing the sequences of time duration and intervals with the expected sequences (values) in a childbirth timing apparatus (Col. 5, lines 30+; Col. 6, lines 1+). It would have been obvious to a person skilled in the art at the time of the invention to not only recognize that Forbath indeed does "select" at least one alert parameter from the set of contraction modes because as each of the contraction modes has a corresponding alert parameter, when a user selects the contraction mode, the user is also in fact "selecting" the alert parameter, but to also adapt the visible display to include a variety of commands and notations for contraction parameters, as well as to adapt the Forbath reference to compare and evaluate the actual time values with the expected time values

during the birthing of a child. By comparing values, the user may evaluate the level of success during the birthing process in regards to contraction times and breathing patterns. Forbath does teach the alert means where once a calculated value matched a value or threshold of a predetermined programmed within the microprocessor, an alert means is actuated, subsequently alerting medical personal to assist the pregnant woman involved.

Regarding Claim 8, Forbath teaches a method of timing childbirth labor contractions comprising the steps of: providing a timing device with a visible display 20, a calculating means U2, a memory device U1, U3 and a selection means 18; selecting an initiation time for each of plurality of labor contractions at the onset thereof; displaying elapsed contraction time during each of the contractions on the visible display; selecting a termination time for each of the labor contractions at the diminution thereof; calculating a contraction time duration for each of the contractions; storing each of the time intervals and time durations in the memory; and displaying the time durations and intervals, in sequence, including visual indication distinguishing between time duration display and time interval display, as well as audible alert warnings provided by the system during the labor pain timer mode and contraction rehearsing mode in response to the programmed microprocessor commands, as well as enabling an alert action when a programmed value matches a recorded/calculated contraction interval and duration values, further including labeling for contraction duration and interval, further including steps of storing a plurality of childbirth labor practice instruction sets in the memory

device, the instruction sets including an early, middle, and late phases of pregnancy phases, as well as displaying and indicating one of the practice sets, and an audible sound to alert when a contraction occurs, further including (Col. 4, lines 19+). Forbath does not explicitly teach the instruction sets including: early labor, active labor, transition labor, and pushing labor, nor does Forbath explicitly teach a method of selecting at least one alert parameter from contraction duration, labor contraction interval, labor contraction duration quantities, labor contraction interval quantities, and the "and" and "or" function storing the selected at least one alert labor contraction parameter in the memory device. It would have been obvious to a person skilled in the art at the time of the invention to not only adapt Forbath circuitry to include a specific number and designating characteristics of practice instruction sets, but to also recognize that Forbath indeed does "select" at least one alert parameter from the set of contraction modes because as each of the contraction modes has a corresponding alert parameter, when a user selects the contraction mode, the user is also in fact "selecting" the alert parameter, and further to adapt the visible display to include a variety of commands and notations for contraction parameters. Although the Applicant includes another "phase" or practice set of pregnancy, the length or duration of these practice sets are not explicitly defined, therefore Forbath could easily be adapted to divide three practice phases to four practice phases, highlighting the fact the total time in labor does not change. Forbath does teach the alert means where once a calculated value matched a value or threshold of a predetermined programmed within the microprocessor, an alert

means is actuated, subsequently alerting medical personal to assist the pregnant woman involved.

Prior Art

1. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Török U.S. Patent No. 5,042,503 discloses a process and apparatus for extended, non-invasive monitoring of uterine contractions.
- Handy U.S. Patent No. 5,876,335 discloses a multipurpose pregnancy and labor timing device comprising an output device for conveying a plurality of datum to a human observer such as a current time, day and date, an expected date of birth of the child, an estimated elapsed time period since the conception date of the child, and a variety of other datum values.
- Tomer U.S. Patent No. 5,876,357 discloses a uterine cervix dilation, effacement, and consistency monitoring system comprising a probe comprising a linear caliper and a flexible membrane is applied to a uterine cervix in order to calculate displacement versus normal values to determine likelihood of birth.
- Bohn U.S. Patent No. 6,122,559 discloses a hand held computer for inputting soccer data comprising a keypad, an audible alarm, and opposing shoulders transitioning from a lower portion to upper portion for improving gripping.

Conclusion

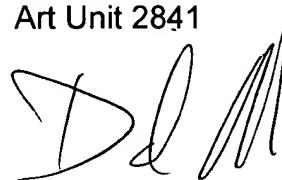
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael L. Lindinger whose telephone number is (703) 305-0618. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday (7:30-6).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Martin can be reached on (703) 308-3121. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 746-7318 for regular communications and (703) 746-7318 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

Michael L. Lindinger
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2841

MLL
January 21, 2003



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